

# ASSESSING THE INTEGRATION OF GENDER INTO THE STRATEGIES OF USAID G-CAP AND THEIR PARTNERS

Technical Assistance Provided by Widtech, a Project of the Office  
of Women in Development, USAID

April, 1997

A Report Submitted by:  
Mary Hill Rojas, Widtech Environment Specialist

**Development Alternatives, Inc.**  
**The International Center for Research on Women**

## Table of Contents

Introduction_____	i
Gender and the Regional Program Strategy: Lessons Learned and Recommendations_____	1
Gender and Reducing Poverty within the Bilateral Program: Lessons Learned and Recommendations_____	11
A Brief Guide to Monitoring and Evaluation to Include Gender_____	16
Future Actions and Follow-up_____	20
Appendices	

## **Introduction**

The WIDTECH Project, funded by the Office of Women in Development (G/WID) of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), is to provide technical assistance and training to USAID bureaus and missions. From April 9- 18, 1997 I, the WIDTECH Environment Specialist, worked with the USAID/Guatemala/Central American Program (USAID-G-CAP) in Guatemala City at the request of Margaret Kromhout, USAID/PDM/Guatemala and Liliana Gil, USAID/WID/Guatemala.

The specific request was for me to review the USAID-G-CAP Regional Program Strategy, FY 1997-FY 2001 and the strategic objective, "Poverty Reduced in Selected Geographic Areas", in the Strategic Plan for USAID Assistance (the bilateral program) to Guatemala, FY 1997-2001. Following the review I was to suggest ways to more fully integrate gender and issues of concern to women into the strategic plans and objectives of these documents. (See Scope of Work in Appendix)

The Regional Program has two strategic objectives: "Increased Participation in the Global Market" with intermediate results in trade and labor and "Effective Regional Stewardship of the Environment and Key Natural Resources". A special objective is to respond to the regional HIV/AIDS crisis. The strategic objective on poverty reduction for the bilateral strategic plan includes three components, increased incomes, health, and education. Therefore, the agenda for my review included in-depth interviews with USAID staff and partners concerned with trade, labor, HIV/AIDS, education, health and the environment and natural resources. (See List of Contact People, Appendix)

At the end of the assignment I gave a "wrap-up session" attended by approximately twenty people from the USAID Guatemala Mission.

The result of this assignment is this report which is divided into four sections: 1) Gender and the Regional Program Strategy: Lessons Learned and Recommendations; 2) Gender and Reducing Poverty: Lessons Learned and Recommendations; 3) A Brief Guide to Monitoring and Evaluation; 4) Future Actions and Follow-up. Recommendations are made throughout the text. An Appendix is included with critical references, the scope of work and a list of contact people.

I am very grateful to Margaret Kromhout and Liliana Gil who planned and supported this assignment. I also want to thank the staff of the USAID Mission and their partners who met with me enthusiastically. They are all to be complemented on the dedication they give to their work which includes gender and issues of concern to women.

Mary Hill Rojas  
Washington, D.C.  
April, 1997

**I. Gender and the Regional Program Strategy**  
**Lessons Learned and Recommendations**  
**USAID/Guatemala-CAP**  
FY 1997-FY 2001

The USAID/Guatemala-Central American Regional Program Strategy includes Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, and El Salvador and with limited activities, Costa Rica, Belize and Panama. The strategy builds on agreements between these nations and the United States (The Alliance for Sustainable Development and the Conjunta Central America – USA as well as the Summit of the Americas Action Plan) The Summit of the Americas Action Plan has an explicit initiative to strengthen the role of women in society.

The objectives of the Regional Program are to: 1) achieve higher rates of growth based on open and expanded hemispheric and world trade; 2) provide more effective regional stewardship of key natural resources in support of sustainable use and biodiversity protection; 3) achieve a greatly enhanced capacity to respond to the HIV crisis. The Regional Program stresses regional integration in areas best met through cross-border actions, e.g. removal of trade barriers; resolution of resource management disputes; containment of HIV/AIDS. The idea is to reduce poverty by creating conditions for “productive investment in concert with sound environmental management and open democratic systems”. (p.4)\* Human capital formation undergirds this goal. (p.2-3)

Gender issues are explicitly mentioned within the introduction of the strategy on only two occasions: a) in relation to poverty: “Throughout the region, the incidence of poverty is particularly high for households headed by women”(p.3) and b) in relation to economic growth, “creating conditions for more broad based economic participation within countries (e.g. through micro-enterprise, credit programs and other activities that improve access to productive resources, particularly for women...”). (p.9) Implicitly, gender issues are included throughout in the emphasis on trade and labor, sound environmental management and the containment of HIV/AIDS. This document will suggest ways to make these issues explicit.

**I. The Program Introduction: Making Gender Issues Explicit**

**A. A Framework**

It is clear from conversations with the staff of USAID and their partners that the importance of gender to their work is understood. Within the Strategy document **it is recommended** that this understanding be made explicit within an overall framework so that gender concerns are not considered a separate component or “add-on” but an integral part of what is to be achieved.

---

\* The page numbers in parentheses, unless otherwise specified, refer to the The USAID/Guatemala-CAP Regional Program Strategy, FY1997-FY2001

For example, such a framework might be: “It is recognized that democratic initiatives by definition require representation of the people involved and that community participation is one way to achieve representation. Although both women and men at the local level face obstacles to participation in the development process, often women face obstacles that men do not. The community-based approach taken in this strategy will rely on participatory approaches, including gender analysis, to identify the roles, rights and responsibilities of women and men in the family, work and decision-making and to assure both men and women are included in the program activities. This approach also will help shape institutional change and inform policy, considering the concerns of both women and men”.

## B. The Invisibility of Women In Development

We now understand that there are many reasons that women often lag behind men on economic, educational and political indices. However, there is one global reason that can be addressed with little difficulty in the Regional Program Strategy document, the invisibility of women.

Women, because they traditionally have not set agendas and served in decision-making roles to the extent men have, are often invisible. Within international development much has been done within the last two decades to make women visible and we now have universal standards and guidance to help us do so. (e.g. The Beijing Platform for Action; USAID/WID Policy and Action Plans; The Declaration of Human Rights etc.) We now recognize the roles women play in the informal and formal economic sectors, in agricultural production, in natural resource management. Women in every country are organizing for greater participation in political systems. Policy is increasingly responsive to women’s claims, for example, to land tenure . Nevertheless, women still suffer from invisibility within policy, institutions and in field programs with the result that the benefits of development overwhelmingly go to men.

**It is recommended** that the Regional Program Strategy make women visible with the addition of language that highlights gender concerns. For example, in the introduction there is discussion of the importance of human capital formation (p.2). Typically, literacy rates for men are higher than for women in Central America and training, seminars and policy dialogues at all levels involve more men than women. If human capital formation and its impact on economic growth and democracy is a focus of the strategy then this gender discrepancy should be mentioned. Another example in the introduction is an emphasis on broad-based economic growth, management of the environment and improvements in human health. (p.6) If the strategy hopes to be truly broad-based then those traditionally not included need to be highlighted, including women, and a statement to this effect made.

Often simple language is enough, for example: “progressive citizens and leaders, *both men and women*, ...” (p.4) Therefore, **it is recommended** that the authors review the introduction to the Program Strategy with the idea of putting people first and, thereby, making women visible. Overall, such inclusion changes the nature of the discourse on, in

this case, trade, the environment and health, to include new concerns, new ways of expressing them and new solutions.

### C. Accessing Gender Expertise

Under the section “Coordination with other Donor Programs” (p.9) **it is recommended** that a statement be included indicating that many of the donors mentioned (e.g. IDB, World Wildlife Fund, DANIDA) have strong gender programs that can be used in support of the Regional Program for research, participatory field methods, training and networking. In general, it should also be noted in the strategy that the expertise of women’s groups, organizations and associations throughout the region will be utilized when appropriate.

## II. The Strategic Objectives, the Special Objective and Gender

### *Strategic Objective One: Increased Central American Participation in the Global Market*

A. In 1996, 75 government officials, policymakers, donors, media and academicians met in the Hague to consider policies, trends and strategies affecting employment and poor women. They met to address the fact that “ changes in the global economy and in national economies have affected patterns of women’s employment and earnings, necessitating more detailed research to determine appropriate policy actions in both developing and “transition” economies.” (See attached ICRW Employment and Poor Women, 1996) The discussion included employment and trade policy and labor issues. The conference led to strategies and recommendations focusing on women’s economic activities in development policy as a means of reducing poverty. The issues discussed relate directly to the Regional Program’s strategic objective for increased Central American participation in the global market.

The conference in the Hague was developed and facilitated by the International Center for Research on Women (ICRW) whose vice-president Rekha Mehra, an economist, is also the WIDTECH project director. The WIDTECH project is funded by the Office of Women in Development of USAID. The founder of ICRW, Mayra Buvinic, also present at the Hague conference, is currently head of the women in development office at the Inter-American Development Bank, a primary partner of USAID/G-CAP. **It is recommended** that USAID/G-CAP tap this expertise through a consultancy with WIDtech in support of the strategic objective on participation in the global market.

B. **It is recommended** that the “Analysis of Problem” section of the SO#1 recognize the work being done on gender issues within the field of trade and labor. An appropriate place for such a statement would be following the section which ends by emphasizing the need for a more equitable pattern of economic growth. (p.15) The statement could also note that one of the four Strategic Objectives of the USAID Office of Women in Development is “Improvements in the economic status of women in Latin America and the Caribbean...”

### 3. Intermediate Result (IR) #1: Improved Trade and Investment Policies

Policy is meant to be responsive to those it serves, in this case the men and women of Central America. Too often gender issues are considered at the local level and this experience is not reflected at institutional and policy levels. What we know of markets, trade, labor and gender at the local level should be reflected in policy. USAID/Guatemala staff are analyzing policy impacts in terms of gender and participation; e.g. the impact on the *maquila* industry, mostly women, of the NAFTA trade agreement; e.g., *campesino* groups consulted for their perspectives on policy oriented to industry versus agriculture. **It is recommended** that this analysis be formalized, expanded, documented and made visible in the strategy.

### 4. Intermediate Result (IR)#2: Stronger Protection of Worker's Rights and Improved Labor

The USAID personnel in Guatemala thought priority concerning gender issues within the SO#1 should be given to this IR. Therefore, the narrative (p.17) should have a paragraph that recognizes the universal standards on women and labor: e.g. the International Labor Organization; the Action Plan from the Fourth World Conference on Women. These standards can supplement the current reliance of the strategy on the World Trade Organization standards.

Much has been learned, worldwide, about gender issues and employment: e.g. home-based labor, discrimination against women due to their reproductive roles, women relegated disproportionately to the "unskilled" categories of work. High profile abuses of women's labor have been given worldwide attention (e.g. Nike in Viet Nam; las maquiladoras in Mexico) and lessons have been learned. The staff implementing this IR is alert to examples of the impact of gender on policy: e.g. women see garnishing of wages a legitimate way to assure child support, whereas men may want it illegal. Certainly women need a place in tripartite decision-making - employers, workers, and unions. Yet, often unions and worker's associations exclude women as members and leaders. The challenge is to introduce gender-neutral policies to all parties concerned. **It is recommended** that the consultancy suggested above can provide a framework and approach for dealing with these issues in more detail. In the meantime, the IR narrative should explicitly mention that the rights of workers, both men and women, are considered.

### Intermediate Result #3: Increased Private Investment in Energy and Telecommunications

In light of the Regional Strategy's commitment to broad-based economic growth it would be interesting to document who is benefiting from the promotion of non-conventional energy production and the use of wireless phone communication in rural areas,

disaggregated by sex and ethnicity (p.17). Certainly some indication of the customers seems appropriate in #3, p.17 as the technology is mentioned but whom it is meant to serve is less clear. Non-conventional energy sources are important for women for cooking and other household activities in both rural and urban settings. There has been one seminar on women and energy conducted under this IR by the Solar Foundation, “Renewable Energy: Opportunities for Women”. Hopefully there has been follow-up to this seminar. However, what is needed is a more comprehensive approach to gender issues and energy. For example, it is mentioned (p.20) that Canadian CIDA will be assisting with the energy sector in the region. Their experience and commitment to gender issues is fully integrated throughout their agency. The USAID Regional Strategic Program and CIDA should develop ways to collaborate on gender and energy. This collaboration should then be mentioned in the IR narrative (p.20).

In conclusion, **it is recommended** that indicators for measuring the achievements under this Strategic Objective be evaluated for their inclusiveness (p.24). Two areas for inclusion of a “who will benefit” indicator are: 1) the multidimensional Indicator of Readiness - the social dimensions should be disaggregated by sex; 2) the proxy indicators being developed to measure “better enforcement of labor rights”. One of the proxies should relate to women. The consultant suggested above can look at these indices for their inclusion of gender.

*Strategic Objective Two: Effective Regional Stewardship of the Environment and Key natural Resources*

The “Programa Ambiental Regional para Centroamerica” (PROARCA) uses a community-based ecological approach. Such an approach recognizes the interconnectedness of the environment, natural resource use and political, economic and social forces. It is holistic, examining, for example, the links of environmentally sound management with economic development. (p.27) In general, the strategy works with the concept that the intentional inclusion of the various members of society changes the discourse on the environment by introducing new concerns, new ways of addressing them and new solutions. As a consequence, the PROARCA Project places “major importance on a participatory process in achieving its objectives.” (Regional Information Bulletin, p.7) This participatory process implicitly includes attention to gender and women’s concerns. However, the Regional Program Strategy does not mention gender or women explicitly. Experience has shown that when women are not explicitly mentioned they will, for the most part, remain invisible. **It is recommended** that the following suggestions be included, in full or in part, in the strategy document.

1. The strategy indicates that “more needs to be done to broaden and deepen constituencies and participation...” (p.28) and that there is a need to “build catalytically on initiatives and resources of an expanded universe of players...These include local municipalities, non-governmental groups, businesses, communities and resource users.” (p.29) It should be noted here that this expanded universe must include women whose roles and responsibilities with the environment are often overlooked.

2. Nadia Gamboa and her colleagues, LEPPI/PROARCA, have begun to address the problem of including women fully in the program activities to reduce the contamination of key pollutants. Their strategy thus far includes a recognition that:
  - a) although women are hypothetically integrated into PROARCA, if there is not a special effort to include them they may remain marginalized;
  - b) the initial rapid analysis of communities must include attention to women, their leaders, their groups, their roles, rights, responsibilities with regard to the environment.
  - c) engaging respected women in the communities – nurses and traditional healers, teachers, and the appointment by mayors of respected women for participation in the PROARCA meetings and workshops – is one way to assure the inclusion of women. Student groups also attract both girls and boys;
  - d) the project design should include specific mention of women in the “target” groups and indicators should, at the very least, measure the number of male and female participants in activities.;
  - e) special problems must be dealt with as they arise, for example, the lack of women in the community committees where decisions are made on LEPPI activities.

**It is recommended** that Nadia Gamboa and her colleagues be given support in implementing this strategy and documenting the results for dissemination.

3. PROARCA works with many different partners at a local, national, regional, and international level. Many of their lead partners and donors (e.g. IDB, Nature Conservancy, IRG, The European Union, University of Rhode Island) have valuable experience with gender issues and the environment that should be tapped and shared across PROARCA. There are women’s organizations throughout Central America with wide experience in working with women at a local level, in analyzing institutional obstacles for women, and for looking at policies for the inclusion of women’s concerns (e.g. in Honduras the association of *campesinas* was engaged in the debate over land tenure). There has been a good deal of research done on environmental issues and gender in Central America ranging from work by the Food and Agricultural Organization to work by the International Center for Research on Women. **It is recommended** that the proposed WorldWid Fellow\* help to bring this information together to serve as the centerpiece for a special meeting/training of PROARCA partners.

4. In general, there are two long-standing USAID supported projects, ECOGEN (Ecology, Communities and Gender) based at Clark University and MERGE (Managing Ecosystems, Resources with a Gender Emphasis) based at the University of Florida. There will be a working session, fall, 1997, to bring together the staff of these two projects with USAID environment and economic growth personnel to provide future directions for USAID with environment and gender. PROARCA may want to be represented.

---

\* The WorldWid Fellowship Program, funded by USAID/G/WID, places mid-career professionals with USAID missions to work on gender issues.



5. Intermediate Result #1: Central American Protected Areas System Developed and Consolidated

- a) Improved Policy Framework: PROARCA has worked with communities to define policy issues, understanding that policy must reflect the concerns of the people it is meant to serve. Policy sets the agenda and historically that agenda is set by men who may inadvertently eliminate women's concerns: e.g. land titling in the hands of men; access and control over traditionally female forest products; the distinction between the fishing systems of women and men and their impact on coastal management etc. It is recommended that PROARCA document their efforts of involving communities in policy formulation through the proposed WIDTECH consultancy on the environment (see "Future Actions and Follow-up").
- b) People in Buffer Zones Adopting Sustainable Management: The criteria for any small grants should include criteria: a) that shows the importance of including gender issues in the grant proposal; b) that indicates there will be an equitable balance between men and women recipients of the grants awarded. Such criteria have been included in the CAPAS small grant program and can be used as a model. **It is recommended** that the results of including such criteria be documented.
- c) Cross Border Conflict: There is valuable work on gender and conflict management dealing with environmental issues often particularly using participatory techniques for bringing various stakeholders together. (e.g. FAO, Department of Community Forestry and RESOLVE, a Washington, D.C.-based group that often focuses on gender and can provide training in gender and conflict management) The lessons learned from the PROARCA experience would be a valuable addition to these on-going programs on conflict management.

6. Intermediate Result #2: Increased Local Empowerment for Stewardship of Natural Resources

In order for the IR to be operational the term "local empowerment" needs to be more broadly defined. One definition could be that decisionmaking about the stewardship of natural resources not only occurs at a local level but in a variety of venues and by a variety of groups. For example, schools make the decision to provide environmental education and women's groups take on a project to clean contaminants from household environments. These are two very different ways to provide stewardship of natural resources. The representation of community members and their level of participation based on gender and ethnicity can be easily monitored. The participation of women can be encouraged through PROARCA. For example, the COSTAS and CAPAS programs work in three areas where gender plays a vital role: a) examining the gap between policy and the reality of policy implementation at a local level; b) documenting the experience of working with communities on environment issues; c) encouraging institutional change in their partner NGOs to be able to include women more effectively. **It is recommended** that within the COSTAS and CAPAS staff there are those who have both interest and expertise in gender issues and they should be encouraged to provide leadership in this area.

## 7. Intermediate Result #3: Reduced Levels of Contaminants by Key Pollutants

In talking with PROARCA staff it is clear that many of the pollutants identified with communities center on the household, which is the traditional domain of the woman – garbage, waste water, drainage problems. (e.g. see attached ICRW Information Bulletin) In order to reduce these contaminants environmental education is a priority. **It is recommended** that environmental education be broadly defined to include, for example, participatory processes where people, themselves, analyze their environments for pollutants; local projects to clean the environment; and pre-packaged materials to support hands-on environment projects in the schools. It is imperative that women be a part of environment education. For delivery of such education it is important to rely on those methods most successful in reaching women. (see, for example, the USAID/Genesis program and the attached description of the CARE/ USAID WID initiative as two past programs sponsored by USAID in Central America that were successful in reaching women)

### *Special Objective: Enhanced Central American Capacity to Respond to the HIV Crisis*

1. Gender relations are central to any program to contain HIV/AIDS. There are studies that show, for example, that women understand HIV transmission and have access to condoms but lack the power to control their partner's sexual behavior. (ICRW, Women and Aids, p.4) The Regional Strategy personnel responding to the HIV crisis in Central America are well aware of this gender dimension. Gender, for example, is clearly embodied in a proposal to develop a gender framework for the HIV strategic objective. The proposal highlights strategies for incorporating the themes of gender, sexuality and power into the strategic action plan.
2. At present women constitute an estimated 40 percent of some 18 million HIV-infected adults worldwide, and the gender gap is closing rapidly in Latin America. (ICRW, Women and AIDS, p.5) It is well established that cultural and social factors play a large role in the transmission of AIDS but the unavailability of reliable data on women's sexual lives and the cultural factors that act as determinants of their sexual experiences are less well known. The authors of the strategic objective on HIVS/AIDS acknowledge male behavior (early sexual experimentation; bisexuality as a manifestation of "machismo"; the acceptance of multiple partners) (p.44) They also acknowledge that gender inequality facilitates HIV transmission. However, women's experiences are missing, perhaps because of the lack of information. **It is recommended** that this gap in the strategy be made explicit.
3. In general, the strategy targets mobile populations that cross borders within the region - commercial sex workers, truck drivers and migrant workers. (p.41) Also "men with men" are mentioned as a group to be targeted. (p.45) Specifically, women are not mentioned except, one may assume, as commercial sex workers and indirectly through the children of HIV-positive mothers. (p.44) No mention is made of female migrant workers. It is assumed that truck drivers are a predominantly male population. The rationale for the

choice of these groups is that they are left largely unattended by NGOS who favor working with the “general populations of women, men and adolescents.” (p.45) **It is recommended** that a statement be made as to why mostly male groups were chosen and clarify how women, nevertheless, are explicitly included, for example in the grants given for peer education.(p.48) This statement indicate ways of bringing women into the HIV/AIDS dialogue. This statement might appropriately come under the section on “Critical Assumptions”.

#### 4. Intermediate Result #1: Policy Development and Public Awareness

The Project staff recognizes the importance of policy being informed by the people, both men and women, it is meant to serve. They are also aware of the importance of an informed public. Therefore, the project through studies and the synthesis of available research and analyses will inform policymakers, advocates for AIDS prevention and the public of “the threat of the epidemic to social and economic growth and stability...” (p.45) There are planned research activities that support the policy initiatives and public awareness efforts. (p.47) It is in this component that explicit mention should be made of research on women’s sexual lives and on the barriers women (and men) confront in controlling their reproductive lives. **It is recommended** that participatory research be conducted with communities to simultaneously gather research data and increase public awareness. Such research, by disaggregating data by sex, also can contribute to how men and women vary in their understanding of HIV and its transmission, their access to relevant services and supplies and their access to the social power needed to feel “that they can have control over their reproductive lives.” (p.43)

The strategy includes the development of leadership and advocacy skills. It is especially important that women be heard as, generally speaking, “Good women know little and say nothing about sexual matters.....” (ICRW, Women and AIDS, p.5) **It is recommended** that respected women in visible positions be encouraged through the regional program to speak out about AIDS, thereby helping to break down these barriers.

#### 5. Intermediate Result #2: Improved Delivery of NGOs to Deliver HIV Prevention Programs

In general, the overall Strategic Objective focuses on interagency donor coordination at the sub-regional level. (p.41) The personnel working with the HIV/AIDS strategic objective have built collaborative working arrangements among the region’s donors and NGOs. All of the major donors (e.g. PAHO, UNDP, World Bank, IDB), have staff with expertise on gender issues and on HIV/AIDS. The “gender-interested” staff among them should be encouraged to network as a part of the strategic emphasis on collaboration.

The Strategy indicates that USAID/G-CAP can fill a leadership gap in the region by working with “our sister agencies in developing a joint vision for HIV/AIDS in the sub-region...” (p.51) **It is recommended** that this vision include a systematic approach to gender and AIDS, building on initiatives already underway, e.g. the AIDSCAP initiative on AIDS, gender and women. (p.52) The proposal from PASCA, “For Assessment of

Gender Activities”, focuses explicitly on ways to involve women’s NGOS in HIV prevention activities and to use the expertise of women’s NGOS to develop a gender framework for technical assistance and training. Such a framework can be a part of the vision.

A follow-on to the PASCA needs assessment survey (p.48) is a plan for training and technical assistance for NGOs. (“Plan de Apoyo para ONGs Centroamericanas que Ofrecen Programas de Prevencion de VIH/SIDA. This plan includes many gender issues,e.g. negotiating safe sex; encouraging men and women to accept responsibility for safe sex. This plan can help guide the planned WIDTECH consultancy.

## **7. Intermediate Result #3: HIV/AIDS Condom Social Marketing**

The CSM component is to achieve a sustainable and effective private sector operation of condom sales and distribution. The gender dimensions of the marketing and customer surveys seem very important if women are to be reached and the stereotypes of condoms (e.g. as male controlled and used for illicit purposes) are to be overcome. One important issue in this regard is that survey questions are often thought to be gender neutral yet may not be. The KAP survey, for example, hopes to document those people who report multiple partners, and the number of sex acts in the last month with a non-regular partner. (“Plan for Improving Client Satisfaction...”) These questions are constructed for men who may take pride in reporting accurate responses. The same questions if given to women would undoubtedly not be answered accurately or be answered at all.

## **II. Gender and Reducing Poverty within the Bilateral Program: Lessons Learned and Recommendations The USAID Mission to Guatemala**

The Final Accord for a Firm and Lasting Peace was signed in Guatemala City in 1996, envisioning a transformation in the country leading to peace and sustainable development. The Peace Accords "portray a new vision of Guatemala, offering space and socio-economic inclusion to groups that have never enjoyed these rights" in particular indigenous people and women. In the Peace Accords Guatemala is recognized as a nation of many cultures where the rights of indigenous people are respected. Women's rights are given attention, especially by eliminating legislative restrictions on women and by guaranteeing their equal access to government programs. (p.9)\*

### **1. The Rationale: Why Women?**

The Strategic Plan for USAID Assistance to Guatemala (the bilateral program), 1997-2001, focuses on three unifying themes that reflect the spirit of the Peace Accords: Inclusion; Local Participation and Empowerment; Poverty Reduction. Issues of concern

to women are clearly present in these themes. The introduction to the Strategic Plan provides the rationale for integrating gender throughout this USAID strategy:

A. 37% of Guatemalan males and 53% of females are illiterate. Among the rural, indigenous population, at least 80% of Mayan Women are illiterate, one of the highest rates for a population group in the Western Hemisphere. (p.6)

B. Guatemalan women average 5.1 births in their lifetime, leading to one of the highest population growth rates in the hemisphere (2.9%) and less than 10% of Mayan women use any form of birth control compared with 43% of Ladinas. (p.6)

C. One in six Guatemalan households is headed by a female, and 72% of rural female heads of household live in extreme poverty. Rural women are far more likely to be illiterate and monolingual in a Mayan language and they frequently do not share ownership rights to family assets. (p.7)

D. Given the inequality of women's access to education, health services, the factors of production and democratic institutions, enhancing their role is critical to the success of the Mission goal and to each strategic objective. (p.12)

---

\* Page numbers, unless otherwise noted, refer to "Peace in Guatemala: Inclusion, Local Empowerment, and Poverty Reduction: Strategic Plan." USAID Assistance to Guatemala; FY 1997- FY 2001.

The introduction ends by stating that "because the situation of girls and women in rural Guatemala is especially critical, and because the indigenous in Guatemala are so universally poor, USAID's poverty activities will have both a gender and a Maya focus".

## **2. Addressing Gender in The Strategic Objective "Poverty Reduced in Selected Geographic Areas"**

The Strategic Objective (SO#2), "Poverty Reduced in Selected Geographic Areas," builds on the themes for the Strategic Plan as a whole and has a clear gender focus. It begins with "poverty in Guatemala is pervasive and severe. Indigenous and rural populations have the greatest likelihood of being poor; women are more likely than men to be poor." (p.57) The authors stress that "Poverty in Guatemala has a Mayan Face" and that the goal for SO#2 is to promote equitable access to economic opportunity where ethnic and gender discrimination are endemic." (p.59)

The strategy for reducing poverty is three-pronged - economic growth, health, education - and within each there is a gender dimension:

## Intermediate Result #1:

### *Incomes of the rural poor increased*

"Particular attention to women will be required to begin to bridge the income gap across gender lines. Employment of women through individual microenterprise and agro-industrial activities is limited in rural Guatemala." (p.60) Credit is highlighted as needed for women who face additional cultural barriers and for "women microentrepreneurs and small-scale farmers." (p.64)

#### Comments:

From conversations with USAID staff there are three areas identified for increasing incomes for the poor: a) non-traditional exports; b) micro-enterprises and c) small-scale farming, particularly coffee. The strategy recommends supporting these areas through: a) village-level credit schemes; b) basic skills training; c) strengthening of community-based organizations.

Women's traditional agricultural roles are expanding in Guatemala to include both the production and processing of non-traditional crops, e.g. broccoli, snowpeas. The impact of this shift on family nutrition (less time spent with subsistence crops) and personal income (income from export crops generally goes to men) is an area to be considered when designing activities. Gender analysis is particularly appropriate with micro-enterprises: e.g. such enterprises may need a cooperative for marketing (e.g. milk, honey, coffee) where women's membership is traditionally limited; marketing may demand trips to urban areas where women seldom go. Women are very involved in small-scale farming activities in Guatemala (e.g. planting potatoes, beans; raising small animals; crop storage and processing etc.)

Coffee, a crop with high earnings, is traditionally a male crop with labor inputs from women. Therefore, **it is recommended** that attention be given to women and coffee. For example, more information is needed on just how women are included: Their roles? The income they receive? Their membership and leadership in cooperatives? The results of the conference "Genero y Cafe" held in Guatemala City in 1996 should be used as one way of understanding women's roles and potentials for coffee growing. It would be exciting to support women in growing this non-traditional crop for women as a pilot activity.

In general **it is recommended** that women be included in income generating activities equitably with men. Gender analysis can give rapid guidance for addressing the obstacles women face in participating in income generating activities and how to address them. Disaggregating program data by sex can determine whether women and men are participating equally in activities.

The credit schemes, basic skills training and strengthening of local organizations should result from careful participatory planning and analysis by the communities, themselves. What are the services needed? Is small-scale credit appropriate? What basic skills can they use? Participatory planning is an effective way in itself to strengthen local organizations and groups. (see Thomas-Slayter, B. et al. "A Manual for Socio-Economic and Gender Analysis"; Clark University: Worcester, Mass. 1996.) Strengthening local groups and organizations should not only be tied to village banking and credit schemes, although this may be one need that surfaces during the participatory planning. Rather such credit schemes may be seen as one of many vehicles for strengthening civic society and participation.

Intermediate result #2:

*Improving health and nutrition practices*

The aim is to increase access to food for rural poor families through mother/child health programs, agricultural activities and strengthening capabilities in local governance.

Comments:

The emphasis on mother/child health, household latrines, potable water, family gardens all demands that women are central to the design and implementation of this intermediate result. It should be made clear, however, that men should be equally involved in, e.g. the nutritional needs of their family, the health of their children, the importance of clean water etc. **It is recommended** that there be an effort to document the lessons learned in how best to reach men and engage men in family concerns such as nutrition, health and schooling. It would seem that the women would have some of the best ideas on how to do this; the men, themselves, would know. Therefore, participatory tools, techniques and processes, including gender analysis would be very useful.

*Intermediate Result: #3: Improving the quality and coverage of bilingual, intercultural education and education for girls*

"Particular attention will be paid to reducing the gender gap in girls' enrollment, participation in the classroom and completion of primary school." This attention includes teacher training to reduce gender stereotypes, methods and materials to address gender inequity, influencing policy through civic society, community-based decision-making, especially women, in education." (p.68-69)

Comments:

The education IR focuses on gender and ethnic inequities: "The average number of years of schooling for Mayans is 1.3 years, compared to 4.2 years for the non-Mayan

population. This statistic is even more overwhelming for Mayan girls, for whom the average length of schooling is less than one year." This IR should be driven by a campaign to focus policymakers on girl's education on the one hand, while at the same time engaging parents, especially women, as suggested, in decisionmaking at the local level. A priority for the communities is to identify the local obstacles for both boys' and girls' education and develop a plan to eliminate the barriers. **It is recommended** that education for girls presents a clear case for working at all levels: a) the field (identifying local obstacles; engaging parents in the schools); b) institutions (addressing gender stereotypes; making schools friendly for girls); c) policy (assuring policy that promotes girl's education and recognizes the gender gap).

In general, the SO#2 proposes to reduce poverty by: a) supporting economic activities; b) improving access to primary education; c) improving health and nutrition practices. The primary communities involved are Mayan, women and men, boys and girls. The specific challenge is to involve women and girls to the same extent as men in the activities of the strategic objective.

As starters, in order to meet this challenge it is recommended that: a) the lessons learned from the CARE/USAID WID initiative be used (see article attached); b) Nadia Gamboa, USAID/Guatemala, be consulted on her recent efforts to include women in the LEPMI program. It is really a truism that if women are to be included special planning must be done.

### **3. A Suggested Approach**

A. Poverty reduction by its very nature deserves a holistic, inclusive, community-based approach. The three components of the Strategic Objective, increased incomes, health and nutrition, and education are clearly interconnected in the narrative. For example:

1. Poor education leaves many men and women with few skills for the formal economy (p.59)
2. Food aid programs include improved agricultural production for women, access to credit and participation in economic activities. (p.67)
3. Education addresses gender stereotypes which in turn helps remove the cultural barriers for women entrepreneurs (p.68)

Such an approach may be best served by elements of an integrated support program, which acts much like a foundation. The "foundation", in this case the GOG, USAID and its partners, establish criteria for funds based on the components of the strategic objective and based on the themes of inclusion, local participation, empowerment and poverty reduction. Gender considerations are an integral part of the "foundation" structure and its criteria for funding. The "foundation" has a gender policy statement. (A policy from Heifer Project International is attached as one illustration).



The men and women of local communities, through organizations and government agencies if appropriate, determine their priorities, given the "foundation" criteria, and apply for the funds with the assistance and facilitation of "foundation" services. The "foundation" has available continued support services, if requested, for the communities managing funded projects. Such services may include training, technical assistance, information dissemination, financial and administrative support. For example, the training can range from participatory planning techniques, to proposal writing, to evaluation, to tree planting. The major responsibility for design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation and request for services falls to the community groups proposing the programs.

In general, the process and the results of such an approach are "owned" by the community. The support provided by the "foundation", however, is meant to assure that the men and women of the communities are not set up to fail because of either lack of experience or lack of skills. It seems USAID Guatemala is familiar with this approach under the program "Accion Sida" and Carmen Aida Gonzalez, USAID/Guatemala, has worked with such an approach with CIDA in Guatemala.

The "foundation" approach can complement more directed and traditional "project" approaches.

For your discussion: "Strengthening of Intermediary and Community-based groups and organizations" should be the only intermediate result. The vehicles by which to achieve this result would be three: health, education and income activities. The "foundation" approach described above would be then a major way of reaching the intermediate result. The "customers" (although this word is not quite right under this scheme) would be primarily Mayan men and women. Disaggregated data by sex and ethnicity would be imperative to document representation and participation.

### **III. A Brief Guide to Monitoring and Evaluation to Include Gender**

Some people I talked with voiced concern that monitoring and evaluation of gender and issues of concern to women was an additional burden on an already full agenda. However, there were many who understood that gender issues were central to the community-based approaches they were using. For both groups documentation was lacking on their achievements working with gender. I include here some ideas for developing a monitoring and evaluation scheme that is both simple, yet encourages documentation.

1. Develop a brief sectoral plan for addressing gender issues including: a) a rationale that answers the questions, "why do we need to pay attention to gender and women"?; b) a definition of priority gender issues, e.g. land tenure, inclusion of women in

meetings; c) the technical assistance and training needed on gender issues; d) methods for monitoring and evaluation.

2. Integrate the plan throughout the narrative of the bilateral or regional program strategies.
3. Make sure the gender issues are explicitly covered in the monitoring and evaluation schemes of the bilateral and regional programs and, in general, insist on disaggregating data by sex. Determine any additional special monitoring and evaluation needed that would be specifically targeted to gender.
4. Keep the daily monitoring and evaluation simple. Except with special studies complex systems overwhelm and often are not needed. For example, when a community meeting with village leaders is held, note the gender of the participants in a journal. Better yet have a community member do this monitoring. If there are no women ask where you can meet with women leaders. Ask yourself how you are defining “meeting” and “leader”. Women both “meet” and “lead” so your definition must be biased if you are attracting only men. This kind of simple assessment both monitors (i.e. keeps track of what is going on) and evaluates (assesses whether what is going on is effective or not).
5. Use conceptual tools to provide frameworks for formal or informal monitoring and evaluation. These also make good discussion tools for monitoring and evaluation workshops. The following are three such tools:

a. The Cornerstones of Gender Analysis

- *Gender relations*: Within the social unit of analysis (household, community, institution, farming system etc.) ask about access and control over resources. For example, who has access to condoms and who controls their use; who has access to tree products and who controls their use; who has access to education and who sets the education agenda.
- *Gender Roles, Rights and Responsibilities*: Often the roles, rights and responsibilities of women and men differ. If you target truck drivers for HIV/AIDS prevention you are most likely targeting men. If you provide training during the hours women must tend children you train men. Therefore, ask: What is the division of labor between the sexes? (e.g. men plant, women weed, men harvest, women cook the produce); What rights do men have that women do not have and visa versa? ( e.g. a livestock project may target women but on the death of a husband the cows go to the male relatives, not to the widow) What responsibilities? (e.g. women pay school fees and are concerned with the health of the children)
- *Socio-spatial Dynamics*: Mobility, displacement, migration, and the spatial location of human activity are commonly differentiated by gender. (Public

spaces may be primarily male, e.g. formal meetings. Land close to the household may be primarily female, e.g. kitchen gardens and range chickens. Women's space for mobility may be limited.)\*

#### b. The Three Levels for Considering Gender

Very often we think of gender only within the context of field programs. However, of equal importance are institutional structures and policies. It is important to remember that there are three levels for considering gender.

- *The Field Level:* For example, ask questions such as how are men and women included in programs and projects at a local level?
- *Institutional Level:* For example, ask questions about how responsive institutions (including the NGOs and donor agencies we work with) are to the men and women they are meant to serve? How do institutional structures include or exclude women within their programs and among their staff?
- *Policy Level:* For example, ask how responsive are policies to the men and women who will be affected by them? Who sets the policy agenda and what policy issues are particularly of importance to women, e.g. land tenure?

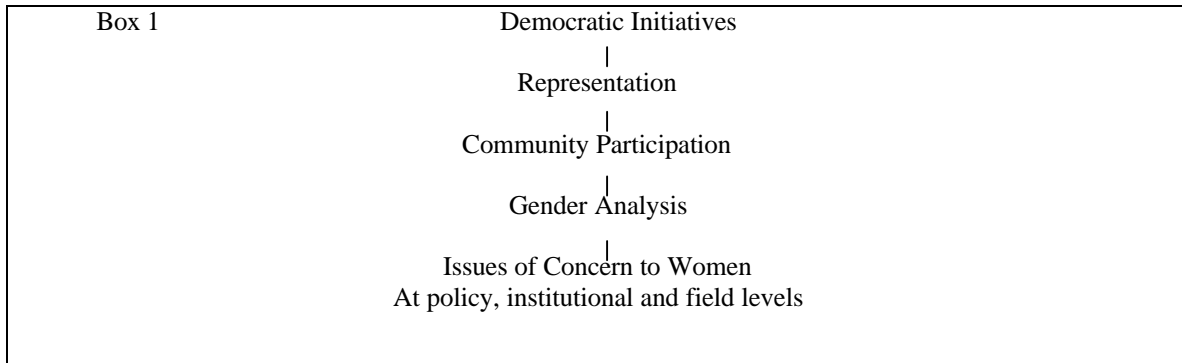
---

\* See Mary Picard , A Guide to the Gender Dimension of Environment and Natural Resources Management. USAID, 1996)

#### c. An Integrated Approach for Gender

Often gender and issues of concern to women are thought of as a separate component of development projects, programs and activities. Gender issues are seen as an "add-on." However, most development work is implemented within a framework of democratic principles, often through a community-based approach:

A simple framework for an integrated approach to gender recognizes that democratic initiatives by definition require representation by the people involved. Community participation is one way to achieve representation. One tool for understanding communities is gender analysis which identifies the relations between men and women, their roles, rights and responsibilities and the spatial dynamics based on gender. Often through gender analysis issues of concern to women emerge. Through such an approach institutions and policies can be more responsive to the men and women they are meant to serve. (see Box 1)



This is a simple way of thinking of gender as fully integrated into development.

6. Include “hook” words in such official documents as strategy statements and plans and “R4s”. “Hook” words (“gender”, “ethnicity”, “women”, “sex-disaggregated data”) allow readers to understand that priority is being given to certain ideas and concepts even though they may not be fully explained in the document. E.g. a strategic objective table may comment that “participatory development of management plans is done in consultation with communities, including ethnic groups and women.” These words can serve later as “hooks” for those setting up monitoring and evaluation systems to allow for further explication and the inclusion of gender.

7. Indicators should explicitly mention gender. For example, the USAID/Guatemala Strategic Objective Performance Table for “Sustainable Land Use Management and Conservation of Biodiversity in Priority Areas” has included indicators for people’s participation that disaggregates data by gender and ethnicity.

6. For help with building indicators for “gender”, “empowerment” and “participation” begin with: Thomas-Slayter, Barbara et al. “Gender, Equity, and Effective Resource Management in Africa: Building Indicators”. ECOGEN: Clark University, Worcester, Massachusetts. 1996 and “The Guide to Gender-Sensitive Indicators”. The Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA): Toronto, Canada. 1995.

9. For participatory tools and techniques for working with participatory monitoring and evaluation consult: Thomas-Slayter, Barbara et al. “A Manual for Socio-Economic and Gender  
B.

#### **IV. Future Actions and Follow-up**

In general, both the Guatemala bilateral program and the regional program should utilize the varied resources of The USAID Office of Women in Development, e.g. WIDSR, WIDTECH, WorldWID. If requested, G/WID can assist both programs in developing a

strategic plan for capitalizing on the achievements of the Mission in incorporating gender. This document is one piece of such an overall strategy.

A. Distribution list for this document:

USAID-G-CAP personnel for their action on the recommendations of this document:

Barbara Ellington, Environment and Natural Resources;  
Liliana Gil, Women in Development;  
Margaret Kromhout, Project Direction and Management;  
Patricia O'Connor, Health and Education;  
Randall Peterson, Trade and Economic Analysis;  
Thomas Pierce, Environment and Natural Resources;

USAID G/WID personnel for their action:

Andrea Allen, G/WID.  
Peter Davis, Development Alternatives Inc.  
Virginia Lambert, G/WID  
Rekha Mehra, WIDTECH;  
Muneera Salem-Murdock, G/WID

B. Suggested Consultancies Through USAID G/WID

1. PHN Specialist to implement with Stan Terrell and Michael Stalker the HIV/AIDS proposal for an assessment of gender activities. (tentatively: June, 1997)
2. Economist to assist the Trade and Labor sector of the Regional Program Strategy – Contact person: USAID/Guatemala, Randall Peterson (to be requested)
3. Environment Specialist to work with Carmen Aida Gonzalez and Alex Dickey to document field, institutional and policy level gender achievements, especially linking with COSTAS and CAPAS. (tentatively: July or August, 1997)
4. Training Specialist to assess gender training needs of USAID staff and their partners. (to be requested)

C. Special Efforts

1. WorldWid Fellowship

Margaret Kromhout is in contact with Virginia Seitz, director of the WorldWid Fellows Program. A Fellow at the USAID/Guatemala Mission could:

In general:

- Document the lessons learned from field level activities addressing gender
- Document the various groups working with gender issues within Guatemala (and regionally) and initiate a network that would meet periodically

- Document the materials available in Spanish and available locally on gender issues
- Identify obstacles to women's participation in USAID activities at all levels and determine ways to remove them .

Specifically:

- Work with one sector, designing, implementing, monitoring, evaluating, activities, projects and programs depending on Fellow's area of expertise. E.g. environment, economic growth, education, health.

## 2. Studies

- Study on Coffee and Women (literature review; their current roles, rights, responsibilities in the field, in institutions, in policy; how best to encourage women to grow coffee as a cash crop; the women leaders who grow coffee and male leadership ideas on women and coffee etc. etc.)
- Study on land tenure and gender issues in Guatemala if not already done
- "Copmagua" Study - Within the Peace Accords women have been singled out and specifically Mayan women for attention. This is an historic moment that should be documented. This is an ideal study for a master's thesis or PhD dissertation.

## 3. Exchange Visits: G/WID and USAID Guatemala

- Those USAID/Guatemala staff coming to Washington, DC can plan visits with G/WID (including WIDTECH), e.g. Barbara Ellington, E/NR in June, 1997
- Those USAID/Guatemala staff interested in the proposed working session of MERGE and ECOGEN on gender and the environment to be held in Washington, D.C. in September may want to attend if feasible.

## List of Contact People

### USAID Mission:

Edin Barrientos, E/NR  
 Juan Belt, Deputy Director  
 Leticia Butler, Deputy Director  
 Julio Diaz, Education  
 Alexander Dickey, E/NR  
 Barbara Ellington, E/NR  
 Liliana Gil, WID  
 Carmen Aida Gonzalez, E/NR

Margaret Kromhout, PDM  
Roberto Morales, E/NR  
Patricia O'Connor, Health and Education  
Tracey Parker, E/NR  
Thomas Pierce, E/NR  
Erhardt Rupprecht, Deputy Director, arrives June 1. 1997  
Martin Schwarz, PROARCA  
Stan Terrell, HIV/AIDS

#### Partners

Rosolino Bianchetti, Asociacion Chajulense  
Marcia Brown, COSTAS  
Jorge Cabrera, CCAD  
Michelle Cato, PSI  
Jose Courrau, CAPAS  
Nadia Gamboa, LEPPi  
Jan Laarman, CAPAS  
Sylvia Marin, COSTAS  
Teresa Robles, CAPAS  
Magali Rey Rosa, Colectivo Madre Selva  
Michael Stalker, PASCA  
Allen Turner, COSTAS